



WHAT'S NEXT '09

NWMISSOURIAN

The proof is in the real world: college diplomas make a difference

High school seniors, please bear with me.

I'm about to make a plea that you've undoubtedly heard thousands of times before.

Hopefully, I can give just a slightly different take on it.

A college education is one of the most important things you will attain in your lifetime.

Yeah, yeah. You've heard your parents say it countless times. You'd probably just as soon prefer to take a shot to the old cobbles as hear it again. But maybe I can relate a little more closely.

It's because I'm non-traditional. I'm older than most students, yet still young enough to where I can fit in without anyone being none the wiser. Basically, I'm a student who already knows a little bit about the "real world."

You see, I made some poor choices when I was 18. After high school, I decided I'd had enough of it. I bounced in between a few unfulfilling jobs before landing in factory work. While there, I worked hard, did a good job and made pretty decent money. I had the respect of my peers, but at the end of the day, it didn't really matter. I was miserable.

That's because without an education, you're simply "low-skill." You're expendable. And you won't have the respect you crave from your boss or the ability to work your way up the



Kenny Larabee
Contributing Columnist

ladder without it. It doesn't matter how hard you work or how well you do your job – trust me, it's a myth: I've seen it firsthand.

Please don't learn the truth the hard way, years from now when the mortgages and the ex-spouses and the children are piling up.

Don't get me wrong. There are a

lot of good, hard-working people out there without higher education. I wouldn't trade my background that was forged in a blue-collar environment for anything. It's just that those people are short-changed every day. Don't

believe me? Ask them. Just make sure you're asking the people who work with their backs every day and not the ones who are in charge.

Now, as I wind my time down at Northwest, even in these tough economic times, I have the freedom to choose what I want to do. I have employers reaching out to me. Doing a good job and working hard has gotten me noticed. I can't put into words how much happier and self-confident I am now than before I started school.

Having the perspective of being non-traditional and having real-world experience undoubtedly made me appreciate my time in school more. There were teachers that inspired me and epiphanies when the lights came on in some dark, remote room in

my brain.

I just hope that those of you getting ready to enter college find those moments that make it click with you or inspire you and can truly grasp how important the journey you're about to embark on is.

It won't always be fun. There'll be times (especially if you choose Journalism as a major) when calling your workload intense would be an understatement. But it'll be worth it.

The argument might seem pretty obvious to some, but through the eyes of an 18-year-old fresh out of high school, the world looks a little different.

Trust me, I know. At 30, I think about the decisions I made when I was 18 every time I step into the classroom.

What's Next on the List for You?

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After Graduation Checklist

●	
	1. Mail graduation announcements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	2. Revise Resume <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	3. Research Job Postings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
●	
	4. Practice Interviewing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	5. Consider Grad School <input type="checkbox"/>

Get their attention: tips for writing cover letters that work

By Lisa Houtchens
University News Editor

Cover letters are a reflection of your writing practices and what your goals are. There are specific tips on how to communicate yourself to a prospective employer. Joan Schneider, career services director gives some advice to college graduates seeking jobs.

- Make sure your letter is work and employer centered, not self centered. This is a marketing too that address the needs of the employer.

for yourself, don't do a cookie-cutter cover letter, and make sure to follow up with an employer.

- Address your letters to the specific person you are wanting to reach.
- Use good quality paper and envelopes.
- Keep the letter to one page.
- Make sure the copy is clean.
- Tailor the letter to each employer.
- Make your letter easy to read and attractive.
- Be honest, this is the most important. Make sure you can fully explain all of the examples used in your cover letter.

Résumé should play up skills, education, leave out hobbies

By Lisa Houtchens
University News Editor

When building your resume, make sure you fine tune it to the job that you are seeking, and always keep it up to date. These are the two most basic tips, Career Service Director Joan Schneider said.

Also, your résumé should be your record of where you have worked and what you have accomplished showing what you have to offer to the company, Schneider said.

Other tips such as these will ensure you are heading in the right direction.

Give a summary of skills that match what the employer is looking for.

Always place experience above your education.

Put accomplishments and responsibilities. Accomplishments give the employer a sense of your problem solving abilities.

Don't include hobbies, only put in activities or programs that relate to what you are applying for.

Your résumé should be determined by your accomplishments, if it goes to a second page it should be because of your experience in the work force.

Taylor your résumé to include accomplishments that the employer's need.

Always keep your résumé up to date, don't forget to add your current job and update phone numbers and addresses.

Use the correct jargon on your résumé; know the industry.

Have an electronic résumé available.

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- General Accounting
- Computer Operations
- Office Equipment Operation
- Problem Solving

Experience Highlights

Administrative Support

- Performed administrative and secretarial support functions for the Vice President of a large sportswear manufacturer. Coordinated and managed multiple priorities and projects.
- Provided discreet secretarial and reception services for a busy family counseling center. Scheduled appointments and maintained accurate, up-to-date confidential client files.
- Assisted with general accounting functions; maintained journals and handled A/P and A/R. Provided telephone support; investigated and resolved billing problems for an 18-member manufacturer's buying group. Trained and supervised part-time staff and interns.

Customer Service & Reception

- Registered incoming patients in a hospital emergency room. Demonstrated ability to maintain composure and work efficiently in a fast-paced environment while preserving strict confidentiality.
- Conducted patient interviews to elicit necessary information for registration, accurate prioritization, and to assist medical professionals in the triage process.
- Orchestrated hotel special events and reservations; managed customer relations and provided exemplary service to all customers.

Management & Supervision

- Promoted rapidly from front desk clerk to assistant front office manager at an upscale hotel. Oversaw all operations including restaurant, housekeeping, and maintenance. Troubleshooter and resolved problems, mediated staff disputes, and handled customer complaints.
- Participated in staff recruitment, hiring, training, and scheduling. Supervised a front-desk staff.

Employment History

ACCOUNTING ASSISTANT, Guardian, Inc., Gonic, IL
PATIENT SERVICES REGISTRAR, Grogan Health System Hospital, Grogan, MA
ASSISTANT FRONT OFFICE MANAGER, Sheraton Essex, Essex, CA
RECEPTIONIST / SECRETARY, Family Counseling & Guidance Center, Griffith, CA
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT, Greenland Sportswear, Grant, CA

Education & Training

Grogan College, Essex, CA (1988 - 1989)
Concentration in Business Administration
Technical College, Gonic, IL (1999 - Present)
Hager College, Grogan, MA (1996)
Introduction to Computers and MS Office 2000

Community Involvement

Committed to community service. Extensive volunteer history includes involvement in public schools, Habitat for Humanity, children's homes, and community soup kitchens, work with the elderly, and quilts for children with cancer.

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Dress to impress: keeping your interviews classy

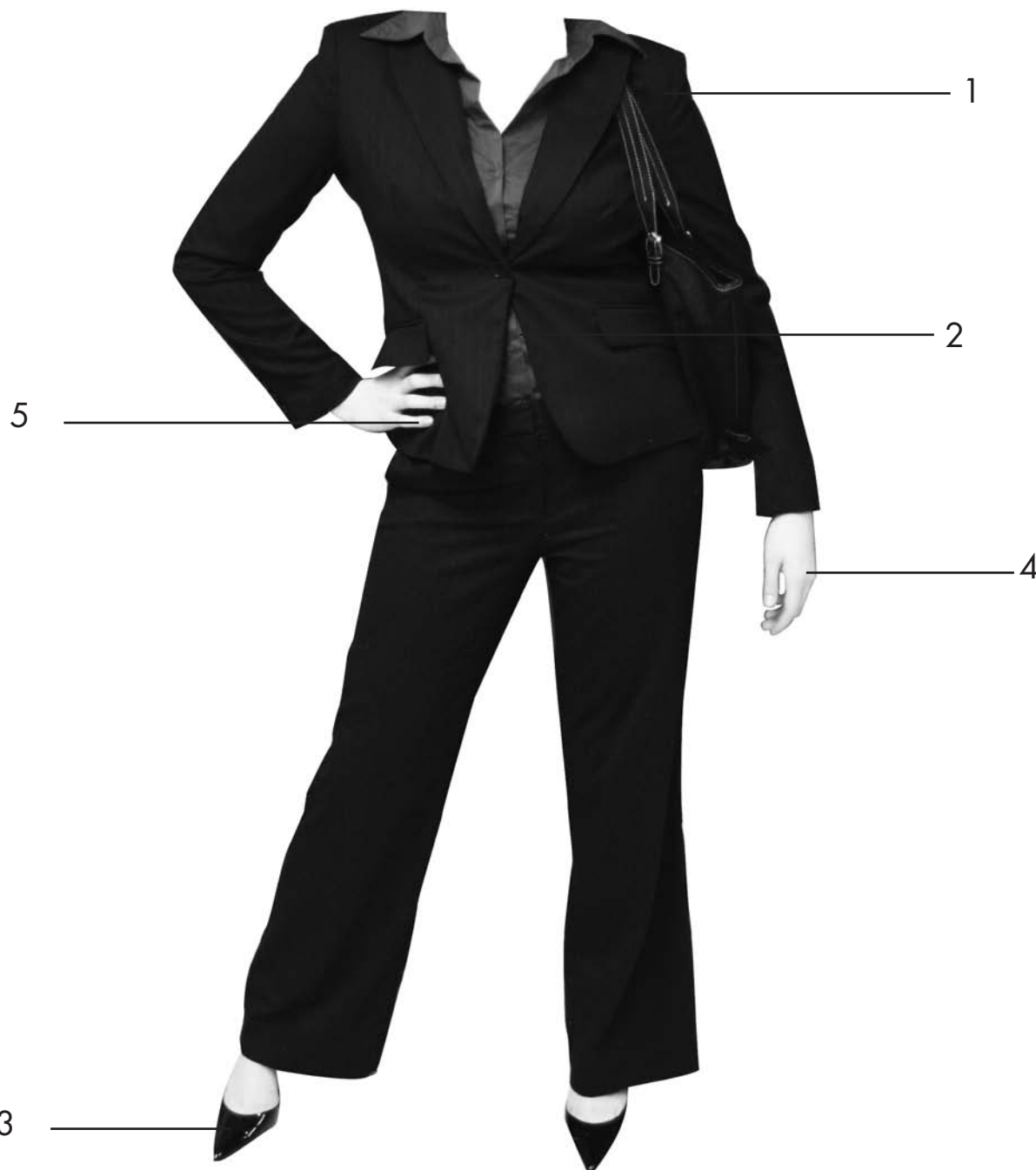
By Lisa Houtchens
University News Editor

What you wear is just as important as what you have to offer. However it may be difficult to decide what threads to pull out of your closet come interview day.

Joan Schneider, Career Services Director offers some helpful advice to make sure you dress to impress.

Professional Attire for Women

1. Wear a suit, skirt that is knee length or pants with a matching jacket in a dark color like black, navy or gray.
2. Dress shirt that is white, ivory or in a pastel.
3. Closed toe medium high heels, in a dark color.
4. Keep jewelry to a minimum, a watch, wedding band and small earrings are acceptable.
5. Avoid perfume, and be conservative with makeup and mute colored nail polish.



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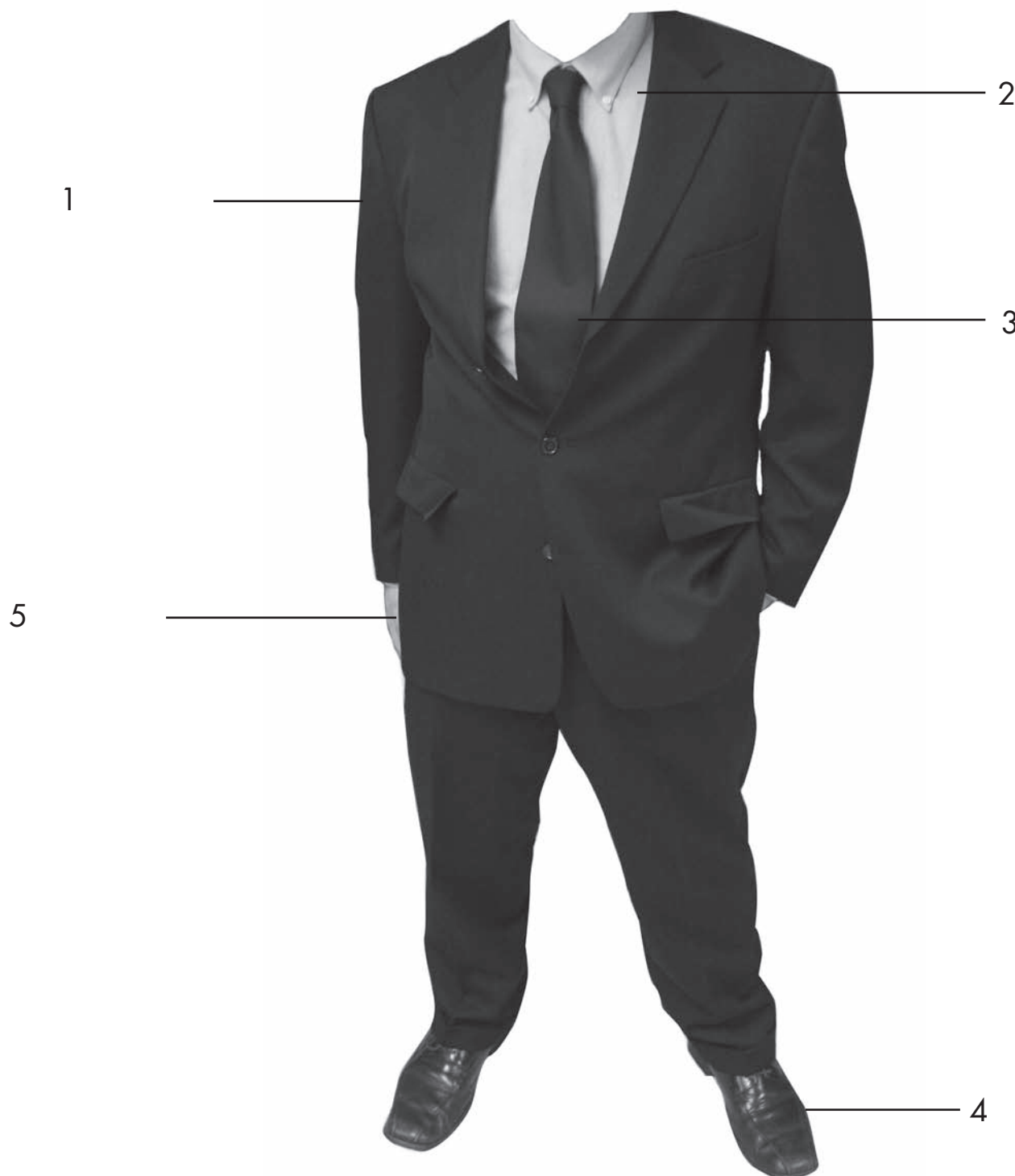
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Professional Attire for Men

1. Wear a suit, dark or gray in solids.
2. Dress shirts that are solid or white.
3. A muted color tie in solid, stripes or a small not overwhelming pattern.
4. Leather lace up shoes or slip on dark colored business shoes, with dark mid-calf socks.
5. Wear a limited amount of jewelry. Watches and wedding bands are appropriate.

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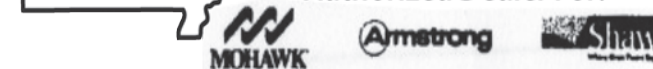


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Having plan makes job search simpler

By Lisa Houtchens
 University News Editor

Finding a job may be difficult, in this economic climate, but not hard if you prepare, Career Serviced Director Joan Schneider said.

Schneider offers some tips to make your search a little easier.

- Know your career goal and what you want to do.
- Prepare a résumé and a cover letter that is fine tuned to that specific job.
- Organize a job

search that is modified to what you want to do and your skill sets.

- Research the job market; be knowledgeable in what you are looking for.

- Network, develop social and professional networks.

- Set up a meeting with potential employers, and if you are unable to agree on a time, send a cover letter and résumé.

- Follow-up, persistence is key in the job search.

- Prepare for the interview; Make sure you have questions to ask the employer.

Make a lasting impression: helpful interviewing tips

By Lisa Houtchens
 University News Editor

You only get one chance to make a good first impression. And the interview is generally the first place this happens.

All an interview is, is putting all you do together, pulling your ability to speak well, be organized and be able to address all issues clearly and concisely, Career Services Director Joan Schneider said.

Career Services offers up some tips to help you succeed in your interview.

- Always research the company, and ask intelligent questions about that organization.

- Practice your interviewing skills, by yourself and with others.

- Be prompt, nothing shows how prepared and on top of things you are like being early.

- Act professional, dress to impress.

- Ask questions through the interview, not just after, let them know you are truly interested.

- Be enthusiastic, let the employer know that you are the best for this position.

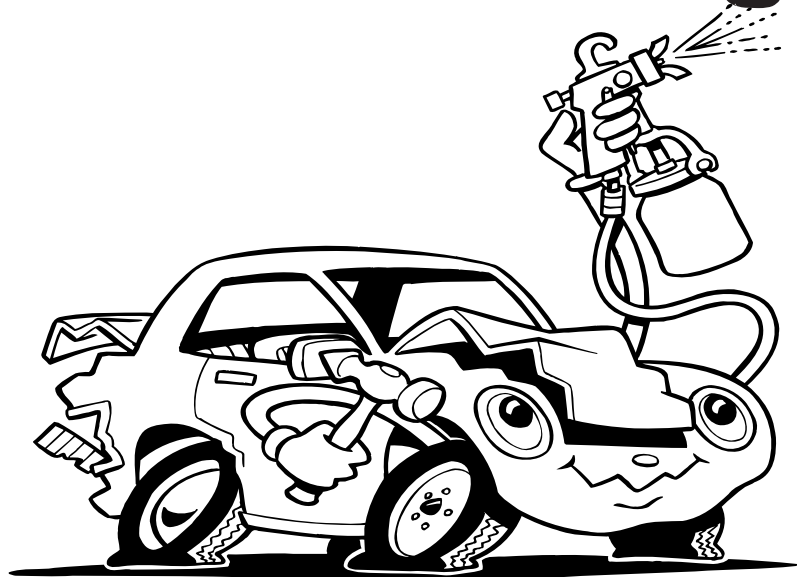
- Never ask about salary, if they bring it up it is alright to discuss.

- Always follow up with the employer, send a thank you note within 48 hours of the meeting.



photo by courtney edwards

Delbert's Garage



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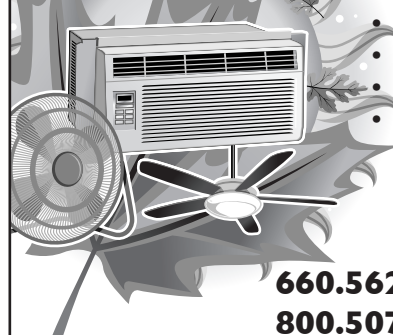
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How to make social networking work for you

By Elizabeth Sexton
Missourian Reporter

Is your day speckled with Twitter tweets or Facebook pokes?

Social networking might be pure, mind numbing fun for now, but inevitably this pleasure is going to mix with your potential business: employers like social networking, too.

During your job search and throughout your professional life, you will be googled, searched, MySpaced, Facebooked and twitted faster than you can update your status.

The wrong online image can block you from your career goals without you ever knowing why. At the same time, your social networking profile has enormous potential to be your personal branding machine - one which happens to be totally free of charge.

So take advantage of what it

can do for your career and avoid social networking no-no's.

The next time you log on for a status update, think about updating your image by following these three tips.

Just delete it

At the time, photos of keg stands seemed totally legit and the bikini pictures added a ton of comments to your Facebook belt.

However, future employers and potential clients may not be as excited to see your extra exposure.

Hiring managers cite controversial photos and visible information related to drinking and drugs as a major employment deterrence.

Delete and untag photos you would not want a future employer to see. Also, rethink posts in which questionable language, nicknames, and racy inside jokes

may have been used. These can be deleted, as well.

Privacy settings

Privacy settings are there for a reason: use them.

Pump up your profile

If you have nothing to hide and want an extra boost of profile professionalism, keep it public and use the forum to enhance your image. Impress recruiters with photo albums of your accomplishments in extracurricular activities, community service or study abroad trips.

Your profile is your additional chance to show off your personal culture and communications skills. But keep in mind, it's outside of your interview, where you can't respond to questions. If it seems questionable to you, then it will be to others.



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